

Storm brings a change to operations

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

The coalition forces of Afghanistan are shifting emphasis to a strategy of enabling enduring security and accelerating reconstruction. Most Soldiers don't get to see such a change take place, but Task Force 1-501st Parachute Infantry Regiment Soldiers got to witness it first hand.

With two major operations already under the task force's belt, its third mission, Operation Storm, is underway.

Unlike operations Avalanche and Blizzard, the current operation is designed to destroy terrorist organiza-

tions and their infrastructure while continuing to focus on national stability and support. This has changed how the Geronimos are conducting business when they go into a village.

"We are practicing a new method of gathering intelligence," said 1st Lt. Huck Finn, a Company C platoon leader. "We have seen in past villages that we have given something to they have come back and given us information."

"Instead of going into a village and searching through everything, we are going in and asking what they need," Finn said. "Nine out of 10 times it is a school



1st Lt. Huck Finn talks with village elders to find out what assistance they need from the coalition forces.

for the kids."

Other things they have asked for are wells or a clinic. One village elder that Finn talked to during Operation Storm came to Salerno two days later with some information.

"He said he spent his entire life savings to get here," said Finn. "We are definitely winning hearts here."

The connection between Afghans and Americans is happening at a level below the leaders.

"If you show them pictures

they love you forever," said Staff Sgt. Robert Mustoe, a Co. B squad leader. "We sit there and joke with them."

At one of the villages Mustoe and his guys taught the Afghan kids how to play hopscotch. He said that it was lots of fun, but made him homesick since it made him think about playing with his own kids.

Regardless of the shift to the rebuilding of Afghanistan the Geronimos have not forgot what brought them here in the first place—the al Qaeda and other enemies of Afghanistan.

To this end when they go into villages they ensure that the Afghans do not have any weapons or munitions which

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Local villagers look through the boxes of humanitarian relief supplies Company C gave them during an Operation Storm village assessment.

Salerno Happenings

Alaskan Comic/Musician Heads to FOB

Hobo Jim travels all the way from Alaska to entertain troops and bring a little bit of home to Salerno April 4. He will make his Afghan debut at 1100 zulu in the expansion area. Bring a chair and come ready for a side splitting time.

New Chow Hours

The location of the dining facility is not the only thing that has changed. The Green Door Cafe has expanded chow hours.

Breakfast:	Monday thru Saturday	0200 to 0500 zulu
	Sunday	0400 to 0700 zulu
Dinner:	Every night	1200 to 1500 zulu

The World

Two Men Share Reward in Sniper Case

ROCKVILLE, Md. - Two men will share a \$500,000 reward for providing information that led to the arrests of the Washington-area snipers nearly two years ago.

Robert Holmes, of Tacoma, Wash., will get \$350,000 for tipping authorities that his friend John Allen Muhammad might be the shooter. Whitney Donahue, of Greencastle, Pa., will get \$150,000 for spotting the snipers' Chevrolet Caprice at a rest stop in Frederick County, Md., where they were arrested.

PowerBar Founder Dies

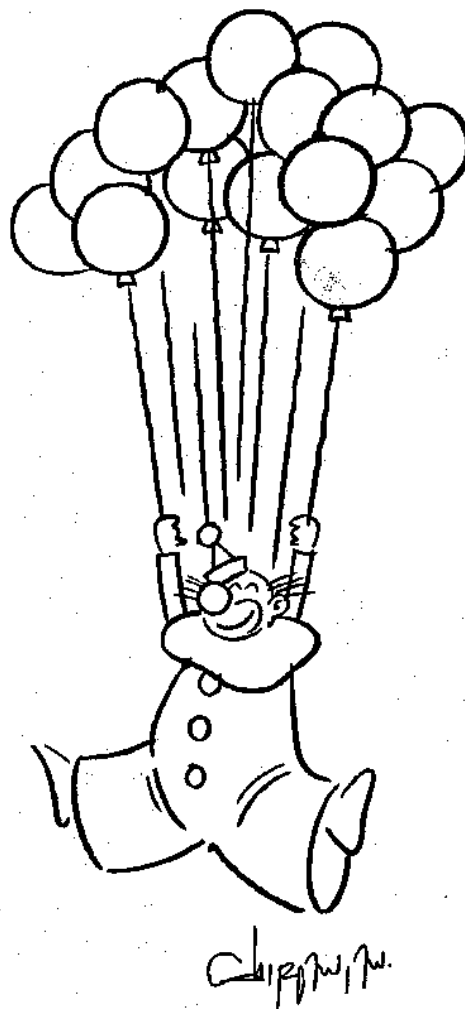
SAN ANSELMO, California — Brian Maxwell, founder of the multimillion-dollar PowerBar empire and a former world-class marathon runner, has died of a heart attack, friends said. He was 51.

Maxwell and his wife Jennifer, a nutritionist, co-founded the popular energy bar company in 1986 and began selling PowerBars out of their kitchen. He came up with the idea after he had to drop out of a 26.2-mile marathon race at the 21-mile mark — about the point where experts say the body ceases burning carbohydrates and begins burning muscle tissue.

Man Tried to Run Over Osama Look-alike

MONTPELLIER, France - A French artist allegedly traumatized by last week's train bombings in Spain was convicted of trying to run over a pedestrian he mistook for Osama bin Laden and ordered to pay the man \$620.

"If it was (bin Laden), we would have won \$5 million," said the man's lawyer, referring to a reward on offer for the al Qaeda leader's capture.



BAF Geronimos keep task force in bullets, beans, mail

Story and photos by
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A vital link to the success of Task Force 1-501st Parachute Infantry Regiment's mission in Afghanistan does not sit at FOB Salerno where the Geronimo's call home in Afghanistan. A small contingent of task force Soldiers live and work at Bagram Air Field.

Although separated from the rest of the task force by 100 miles of mountains the members of the BAF Administration and Logistics Operation Center at BAF ensure that Soldiers on Salerno have what they need to accomplish their mission.

"We are the only task force support group that handles supplies from cradle to grave," said 1st Lt. Eric Swiger, officer in charge of the BAF ALOC. "We order, receive and ship supplies."

Every man in Swiger's group is responsible for a different class of supply and responsible for ensuring that the 1,000 Soldiers, Airmen and Marines at Salerno have what is needed

to complete their mission.

"The purpose of having a resident expert one deep is to push every class of supply to Salerno that includes motor pool, medical and ammo," said Swiger. "Each company has their own supply rep here also."

He said that if he and his Soldiers were not at BAF someone else would be ordering supplies for the task force. But, it would like asking an office clerk to order high speed infantry equipment, they would get stuff, but it would not necessarily be the best item, or what was really needed.

"No one knows what a unit needs better than a member of that unit," Swiger added.

"One company supply guy can not do everything that needs to be done for an entire unit," said Sgt. First Class Mark Jensen, NCOIC of the BAF element. "They have learned to work together and if one company needs something chances are that another



Staff Sgt. James Plant checks the invoice of a contracted jingle truck at Bagram Air Field's gate.

company has a request for the same thing, so one order can be placed and cut down on the work."

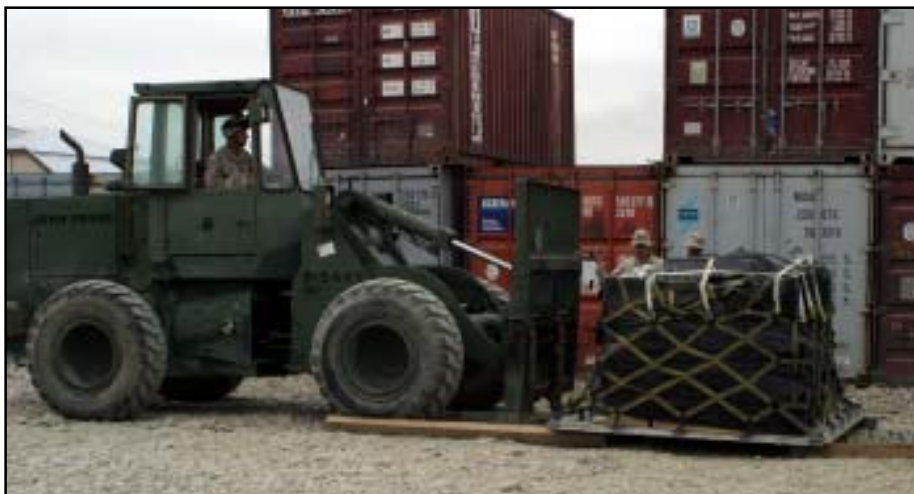
When a request comes in from Salerno the BAF Soldiers know who to contact to get the item either locally purchased or ordered. Once it gets in country they are then responsible for ensuring the order is correct and then sending it on it's way to Salerno for the Geronimos who are waiting for it.

"If that one man deep in the DFAC does not order the food the task force doesn't eat," Swiger said. "If that one man in ammo doesn't do his job, then the task force can't engage the enemy."

Besides ordering beans and bullets for the Geronimos the BAF ALOC is also responsible for all the troopers coming and going from Afghanistan. Orders must be cut and personnel tracked to ensure proper accountability.

Another key element of the mission in BAF is mail. Spc. Newman Crews is responsible for all out going and incoming mail for the task force.

"Mail usually comes in here every day," said Crews. "We process the



Staff Sgt. Douglas Wilson ground guides Spec. Bryan Murphy as they pick up a resupply pallet from the BAF AAFES for shipment to FOB Salerno.

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are unauthorized.

"We found a lot of boxes of AK ammo, and IED (improvised explosive device) making stuff," said Mustoe.

"When we rolled up into one village they were bringing out hand grenades and rounds," said Staff Sgt. Justin Shaffer, a scout with Headquarters Company. "They were glad to see us. They said that American con-

voys had driven up the road on the other side of the wadi, but never stopped in their village."

Their willingness to give up weapons does not hold true in all villages. The first day out on a three day mission an adult male was seen running from a house into a wadi. It turned out to be a teenage boy stashing a couple AK-47s and a recoilless rifle round.

"He was afraid that we were going to take his weapons," said Shaffer. "They know what their government has said they can have, but a lot of them are scared and think we are still going to take their weapon, which is the reason a lot of them lie to us when we come into their village."

Armed with this knowledge the Geronimos have learned that they must tell the Afghans that the coalition forces are here to help them and to enforce what the Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai has authorized for his people. Each adult Afghan is allowed to have an AK-47 with two magazines worth of ammo and either a hunting rifle or a shotgun.

How they approach the Afghans is not the only thing that is different for this operation. Storm is more company focused missions, rather than battalion. Instead of running command and control from a



Sgt. First Class Donald Thomas, Detachment D, talks to village elders about a radio a young boy had as the U.S. convoy was driving by.

fire base, the battalion staff is running the operations from Salerno.

This also means that the companies return back to the FOB for recovery and refit after their three or four days in the field.

"We are out there shorter than the last two operations," said Mustoe. "Shorter missions are better because you can come back here, get a shower, hot food and not worry about pulling 50 percent security."

After returning from a 3-day mission Company C received orders to go back out, a target that had slipped through the task force net two weeks prior had been spotted again. They got their shower and hot chow, but their cots would have to wait.

Unfortunately, their target didn't sleep too long in his bed either. He heard the HM-MWVs coming and quickly disappeared into the darkness of the night.

"The team was kind of mad that we had missed him, because it was the second time we had gone out for this guy and the last time we missed him by an hour," said Sgt.

William Manning, Co. C team leader who's team went into the compound after the man. The target took off so quick he didn't have time to grab all his clothes or wake up his friend who was sleeping in the next room.

Manning said that his team didn't look at this mission any different than any other that they have been on.

"We thought it was going to be like every other mission, you just have to hope for the good," Manning said. "We brought back some PUCs, and it is always good to come back with something."

"We didn't come up empty," said Finn. "We didn't get the target, but we did get some people and a big cache, and no one got hurt—that is what is important."



Soldiers look through a briefcase full of books and literature at a house of a person they PUCed.

AAFES looks to Salerno's future

By Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

A barber shop and a coffee lounge are a few of the possible places Salerno service members might have to relax during off duty time in the future.

Three Army and Air Force Exchange Service employees recently made a stop at FOB Salerno to check conditions for these amenities. The proposed location for these places is the old DFAC.

"We're doing a site survey to see if we will be able to put in these things," said Lisa Martin. "Hopefully if we work out the logistics,

then we can expand the services to the Soldiers here."

According to Kevin Beason, the biggest concern that AAFES has when coming to a base is command support.

"We have already overcome that here,"

Beason said. "The Salerno command is completely behind AAFES improvements here."

Another hurdle that they are looking at is the safety of the FOB and their civilian workers.

"We go where you go!" isn't just a motto, it is how

we work," said Beason. "We would love to open a store at every base, but the logistics has to be there and it has to meet safety requirements for our associates."

Beason said they also want to make sure once the shops are open they are able to maintain them and keep them open. For this reason he no date has been set for when the new amenities will be on Salerno or what we will get.

"Anytime we can bring offer a touch of home the Soldiers appreciate it," said Beason. "Even warriors need to be pampered."



BAF: Cont. from page 3

mail and build a pallet twice a week. It then goes to the JMC (Joint Mobility Complex) where it waits for space on a plane to Salerno."

Like at Salerno when mail comes in, it is more than a one man job. Other Soldiers help Crews sort the letter mail by company, so that unit mail clerks at Salerno get it faster, and thus the Soldier does.

"The biggest hold up on getting mail pushed to Salerno is getting it on a plane," said Crews. "Planes get cancelled due to weather, it may be nice here and in Salerno, but the weather inbetween, in the passes, is not good."

Whether it is the mail, beans, bullets or Geronimos, getting it down to Salerno is top priority for the BAF crew. If they were not in BAF, a logistic unit would be responsible for Task Force

1-501st to get their supplies, but they would also be trying to get the other bases their supplies and equipment also.

"Our loyalties are solely with Task Force 1-501st," said Jensen. "You have to have soldiers from the unit that have a vested interest in getting things for the task force."

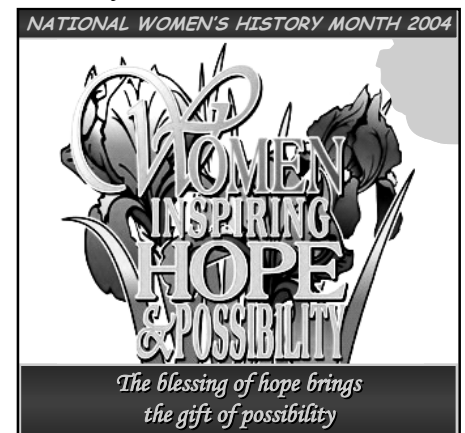
"And, it is not only the task force that we came from Alaska with, but the task force that we operate in Afghanistan with. It is a new concept, a new task force."

Jensen added, that this new ability has not gone unnoticed, and the 1-501st has been identified as the only self sustaining task force in the theater by the coalition command.

"Not only is the task force in its infancy, but so is the support sys-

tem we are doing," said Swiger. "What we are doing here is a learning experience because it is so far out of the main stream of Army supply."

"The task force can not operate without us here," said Jensen. "Here you have 30 guys that serve the entire task force. So few, supporting so many, so that the task force can





Salerno **PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. JEFF TROTH**

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Soldiers eat their first meal in the new dining facility. Kellogg, Brown and Root employees Marcus Burns (right) and David Addison serve up the first breakfast to Sgt. First Class Samuel Corbett and other task force members at the Green Door Cafe. Dean Brunn cooks hash browns in the new DFAC kitchen. Parking is at a premium on the ground and in the air at FOB Salerno. A Detachment D Soldier oils his weapon before heading out on an early morning mission. Sgt. First Class Joseph Walker gives a free haircut to Pfc. Jarrett Adams.



Around Afghanistan

U.S. Airmen Injured; Afghans Turn in Weapons Caches; Police Trainees Recognized

Two U.S. airmen were wounded by a mine at Bagram Air Base, March 13, according to Combined Joint Task Force-180 officials. One airman was seriously injured and was medically evacuated to Germany. The other airman is under observation at Bagram.

The people of Afghanistan continue to cooperate with coalition forces by turning in weapons caches. On March 13, Afghans in Deh Rawod and Gardez turned in weapons caches to the coalition. Coalition forces continue to find weapons caches while on patrols. On March 14, a cache consisting of 30 82mm mortar rounds and 16 fragmentation grenades was found in the vicinity of Khowst.

On March 13, Coalition forces killed three and detained five anti-coalition militia southwest of Qalat. Eight more suspected enemy personnel were detained in the same area on the following day.

Members of the Gardez Provincial Reconstruction Team attended the inauguration ceremony for a group of new trainees at the police training center, on March 13. Governor Wafa and General Hai Gul, Police Chief of Gardez, addressed the 350 trainees. The policemen from Ghazni, Maidan Wardak, Logar, Paktika, Khost, and Paktia provinces begin a three-week training course. This is the third Transition Integration Program course at the Gardez Police Academy. Fifty police officers from Paktia graduated from the program in the past three months. Qualified Afghan police and American experts are providing the training.

Weapons Caches Found; Coalition Forces Attacked, Return Fire

Weapons caches were found and



A TF 1-501st PIR convoy rolls past an Afghan village during Operation Storm.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

destroyed in the vicinity of Khowst, Ghazni and Gardez, March 9, according to Combined Joint Task Force-180 officials. These caches included more than 200 122mm artillery shells, 250 107mm rockets, 175 82mm mortar rounds, tens of mines, grenades, rocket propelled grenades, large and small caliber ammunition, a 23 mm anti-aircraft gun, a DSHKA 12.7mm machine gun, an 82 mm mortar with base plate and spare bipod.

A Coalition forward operating base in Konar province was attacked early March 9, by at least a dozen anti-coalition militia. Coalition forces returned fire. One civilian man was wounded, but coalition forces indicate it is not known if the wound was by coalition forces or by terrorists. The man was taken to the Asadabad hospital. There were no Coalition casualties, and Coalition forces found no enemy casualties.

On March 9, an Afghan citizen led a coalition patrol to a suspected improvised explosive device near Orgun. Coalition explosive ordnance disposal experts destroyed the device in place.

On March 10, two rockets landed in the vicinity of Kandahar Air Field. There were no casualties or damage.

On, March 13, the Ghazni PRT participated in a ribbon cutting ceremony recognizing the purchase of dump trucks that will be used to clean up trash and waste in Ghazni City.

Soldiers Injured in Vehicle Blast; PRT Delivers Furniture to Clinics

A Coalition vehicle was damaged by a landmine or improvised explosive device, west of Ghazni, during the evening of March 6, according to Combined Joint Task Force-180 officials. Three 10th Mountain Division soldiers were slightly injured. Three males were placed in custody, including one found in an outhouse and another discovered hiding under a burkah. Coalition forces did not fire any rounds and there were no injuries among the population.

In cooperation with the people of Afghanistan, Coalition forces continue to remove dangerous munitions from the countryside. On March 7, patrols in Parwan Province confiscated two caches with 20 rocket-propelled grenade rounds, 100 cases of 12.7mm rounds, approximately 50 82mm mortar rounds, and 20 107mm rockets. In Zormat, we confiscated 23 rocket-propelled grenades. In Nagalam, Afghan citizens turned in 20 rocket-propelled grenade rounds. In Gardez, locals turned in 100 cases of 12.7mm ammunition, several rocket-propelled grenade rounds, 40 82mm mortar rounds, and 25 107mm rockets.

On March 6, the Khowst PRT delivered two truckloads of medical furniture to a tuberculosis clinic and a leishmaniasis clinic. The PRT had previously provided the medicines being used at those clinics.



ASK MSG NORDSTROM

If you have a question for MSG Nordstrom, drop it off at the ALOC.

Miss Cooper's fan club in the S2 shop. When you find out let the platoon leader's in Company C know, I hear they have been trying to get some maps printed, but can't find a large printer on the FOB with ink. MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,

Since you knew Henry Ford and helped with the first car can you give me some safe driving tips?

Yours Truly, Speed Racer

Dear Speedster

First off, Henry wanted to call it a mechanized thingamajig on wagon wheels. I had to talk him out of that. Second I think I have seen you zooming around the FOB. Slow down and use that ground guide at night. The life you save might be mine. I have lived this long and I don't need to be taken out by an outta control speed demon, with no common sense.

MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,

I just wanted to thank the S-1 shop for getting, managing and running our PX, also for acquiring everything they get for the MWR site, gym, plus going to BAF to get money for casual pay, all the while processing awards, NCOERs and keeping my pay straight. Do they need my help with all the stuff they're doing? Respectively, Volunteer

Dear V,

Where have you been for the past couple months? Of course they can use some help. Have you ever met those guys, they definitely need help in the biggest of ways.

MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,

This past week there was a poster up in the new DFAC of the ummmm, "lovely" Miss Salerno. I was wondering where I can get some posters made up of the Afghan countryside I shot.

Signed, Shutter Bug

Dear SB,

I am not sure where they got it made, you might want to check with

Dear MSG Nordstrom,

I heard there was a fat cobra on FOB Salerno, what should I do if I see it? Signed, Scared of Snakes

Dear SOS,

I fortunately have not come across any cobras lately, fat or skinny. Them cobras make good eatin. If you do come across a fat cobra, send up a flare and the Chaplain will come running. That is if he

can get out of his duck blind.
MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,

Is there some Army reg about wearing Haji scarfs? That CSM keeps telling me to take it off.

Signed, Want to be little SF

Dear Misguided,

Unfortunately 670-1 was written without taken into account every conceivable piece of clothing on this giant marble we call Earth. But a good general rule when wearing your uniform is, if Uncle Sam didn't issue it to you, it don't belong.

As far as the CSM, he is a push over, but he is the senior NCO here and the standard bearer for the uniform. If it isn't in AR 670-1, check CSM 670-1.

MSGN

Dear MSG Nordstrom,

I am bored and have nothing to do at night. Do you have any suggestions how a guy can pass the night away. Respectively, I Don't Own a TV

Dear IDIOT

What do you mean you have nothing to do? You need to poke your head out of your fart sack a little more often trooper. Have you been to the Hard Rock? They have books and games that I have checked out. They also have a large library of movies, but I haven't watched any of them, they don't have any that will fit my projector. What is this DVD and VCR crap?

MSGN



ARMY POST

How many of the following U.S. Army posts can you locate in the puzzle?

Benning
Bliss
Bragg
Campbell
Carson
Drum
Greely
Hood
Irwin

Jackson
Leavenworth
Lewis
McPherson
Meade
Polk
Richardson
Riley
Wainwright